

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2, 4-9, 12 and 14 are pending.

Claims 2, 4, 5, 12, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harvey et al. (US Patent No. 6,784,901) in view of Komata (US Patent Publication No. 2001/0008850). Claims 6 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harvey-Komata in view of Finkelstein et al. (US Patent No. 6,025,841). Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harvey-Komata in view of McKinnon et al. (US Patent No. 6,392,667).

An objection to Claim 2 has been addressed with an amendment of claim 2.

I. ARGUMENTS

A. The Present Invention

Various embodiments of the present invention allow a user to not only monitor the "strength" of a message received from another user, but also allows a user to monitor the "strength" of their own messages.

In various embodiments, a user that sends messages can view the message they send to another user. The font size of the sent message depends upon the "operation strength" of the user. An example of this is illustrate in Fig. 6 and discussed in the specification.

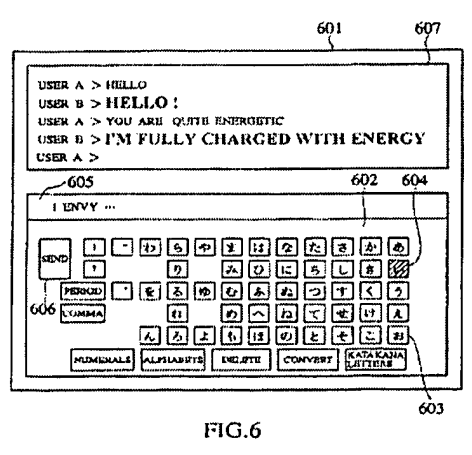


FIG. 6

The specification states that the user's operation strength is detected, a font size is determined based upon the operation strength, and the user's message is output to the user in the determined font size. Specifically, the specification states:

In step S408, changes in the pressure of pushing the circle button 205 when deciding to send may be followed in a small time unit, and the font size of the letters to be displayed in the letter string presentation area 605 may be changed in accordance with the pressure in each time unit, so that the user can confirm how the information to be sent by him/herself will be displayed on the partner's side and in the log display area 607 on the side of the user him/herself. P.18,l.27-p.18,l.5. Emphasis added.

As noted above, the additional functionality provided to the user is that the user can see how energetic or the strength of his or her own message in addition to the strength of the other user's message, in context. To reiterate this point, the specification states:

By changing the font size of the letters to be displayed in the letter string presentation area 605 each time strength information is acquired, the user can check how the information to be sent by him/herself will be displayed on the partner side (and in the log display area 607 on the user side). P.20,l.5-8. Emphasis added.

Claim 2, as amended, is directed to reflecting such functionality. More specifically, claim 2, as amended, now recites:

a font acquiring unit that acquires font information designating a font having a size which is pre-associated with the average or the weighed average of the operation strength with which the user presses the keys or the buttons for inputting the edit instruction and the strength information specified in the receiver side message received from said another communication device;

Additionally, it is noted that claim 2 already recites:

a display image generation unit that generates a display image whenever said letter string editing unit receives an edit instruction or said reception unit receives a receiver side message, by depicting the letter string to be edited currently with the acquired font for the average or the weighed average of the operation strength and depicting the letter string specified in the receiver side message with the acquired font for the strength information specified in the receiver side message.

B. The Cited Art

1. Harvey

As previously discussed, Harvey merely describes a chat system where the sender can specify how many other users can receive the sender's message. To do so, the user can deliberately specify a "speak" mode, Col.8, l.36-39, a "whisper" mode, or a "shout" mode, col.8, l.39-48. Based upon the selected modes, the number of recipients of the chat message may be changed. It is noted that Harvey does not even suggest that an operation strength is related to the selected mode.

As also previously discussed, the characters in Harvey have a default font size that is user specified. In the Examiner's action, the Examiner agrees that Harvey fails to disclose determining a font size based upon the user strength or pressure of a controller. For example, the Examiner stated:

However, Harvey does not teach that the operation strength information that the font is pre-associated with is based on the strength with which the user presses the keys of the keyboard or the buttons of the controller ... P.6.¶2.

2. Komata

Komata relates to a "love simulation game." In such a game, the player interacts with on-screen computer characters. Specifically, in the Background, Komata states:

[0002] Among computer games, specifically in a so-called love simulation game, exchanges between the player and the on-screen characters cause changes in the "emotions" of the characters with respect to the player.

Although Komata describes some methods for inputting user emotion or volition in [0034]-[0042], Komata does not describe any practical use of such emotion or volition. The only reference of such use is in Fig. 4, step S5. Specifically, Komata only states:

[0065] In step S5, the game proceeds depending on the aforementioned value of emotion or volition.

In sum, Komata simply appears to allow the user to input an "emotion" or "volition" to a computer game. Komata does not disclose the input emotion or volition for use in a chat system, Komata does not disclose the input emotion or volition for use in determining a font size, and Komata does not disclose the input emotion or volition being directly feedback to the user.

C. The Cited Art Distinguished.

1. **Claim 2**

Claim 2 is not obvious in light of Harvey in view of Komata. More specifically, the combination does not even present a prima-facie case of obviousness.

Neither Harvey or Komata disclose a font acquiring unit that acquires font information designating a font having a size which is pre-associated with the average or the weighed average of the operation strength with which the user presses the keys or the buttons for inputting the edit instruction and the strength information specified in the receiver side message received from said another communication device, as recited in claim 2.

Initially, Harvey does not disclose changing a font size in response to any strength or pressure of a controller, as the Examiner agreed.

Komata also does not teach this limitation either. As shown above, Komata merely teaches input of emotion or volition to a game. Komata does not mention that emotion or

volition is any way related to a font size. Accordingly, Komata does not disclose the "font acquiring unit" limitation, recited above.

Additionally, neither Harvey or Komata disclose a display image generation unit that generates a display image whenever said letter string editing unit receives an edit instruction or said reception unit receives a receiver side message, by depicting the letter string to be edited currently with the acquired font for the average or the weighed average of the operation strength and depicting the letter string specified in the receiver side message with the acquired font for the strength information specified in the receiver side message, as recited in claim 2.

As noted above, Komata does not disclose anything at all about a chat system, or providing any display feedback of message strength back to the user.

Harvey also fails to provide any display feedback of message strength. As discussed above, in Harvey, "speak" mode, "whisper" mode, and "shout" mode simply determine the number of receivers of a chat message. Additionally, in Harvey, the font size is pre-determined and not related to the "operation strength" of the keys or buttons.

In contrast, as illustrated in the embodiment in Fig. 6, of the present disclosure, the user can not only see the message from another user in the font associated with the "operation strength" of the other user, but the user can see the message they send, in the font associated with their "operation strength."

Accordingly, in light of the above, the combination of Harvey in view of Komata fail to disclose all the limitations in claim 2.

Even if Harvey and Komata were combine, the combination would not suggest the limitations above. For example, because Harvey is completely silent as to emotional or volition of a chat message, it would be unclear how the teaching of Komata could even be combined. It is asserted that using only by using hindsight, that the Examiner suggests that the emotion or volition could be used to determine a chat "mode" of Harvey. That suggestion is traversed because the "modes" of Harvey are simply related to how many users will hear a chat message, which is totally independent of a user's emotion. If emotion were even considered in Harvey, a happy or angry emotion message could be sent to a small number of users via a "whisper" mode, a happy or angry emotion message could be sent to a larger number of users via

a "shout" mode, etc. As can be seen, the combination would have the number of users receiving a chat message independent from the emotion or volition of a message. Accordingly, the combination of Harvey and Komata, as suggested by the Examiner is traversed.

Furthermore, the two cited arts are completely in different arts. Harvey relates to a chat system, and Komata relates to a user playing a game. In Komata, the emotion or volition of a user is the primary input into the "love simulation" game. In contrast, in Harvey, the primary focus is an interactive chat system with other users, where the textual chat is the primary focus of the chat system. Accordingly, the cited arts are not even directed towards the same problem or issues.

2. Remaining Claims

Claims 4,5,6,7, 8 and 9 dependent upon claim 2 are also asserted to be allowable, for substantially the same reasons as claim 1, and more specifically, for the specific limitations they recite.

Independent claims 12 and 14 are also asserted to be allowable, for substantially the same reasons as claim 2, and more specifically, for the specific limitations they recite.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

/Stephen Y. Pang/

Stephen Y. Pang
Reg. No. 38,575

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP
Two Embarcadero Center, Eighth Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-3834
Tel: 650-326-2400 Fax: 415-576-0300
SYP:djb
61341259 v1